

September 28, 2011

Michael Machado
Delta Protection Commission
PO Box 530
Walnut Grove, California 95690

Dear Mr. Machado,

I am writing on behalf of the UC Small Farm Program to express support and commitment for a National Heritage Area (NHA) designation in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, for which the Delta Protection Commission is conducting a feasibility study. Our support is conditional on the inclusion of language regarding Private Property and Regulatory Protection similar to that included in pages 15 and 16 of your Preliminary Abridged Draft dated August, 2011. Such language needs to be incorporated into enabling legislation for a Delta NHA, to ensure that the property rights of private property owners are not impaired by the creation of the NHA.

The UC Small Farm Program envisions a California agriculture in which small and family farms remain dynamic, viable components of their communities. This vision is reinforced by the Delta NHA's goals which include supporting the Delta's economic development by drawing visitors to designated sites, and promoting heritage tourism, ecotourism, and agritourism in the Delta.

Depending on staff availability, the UC Small Farm Program could serve as a partner to the NHA management entity, by working together on projects that would further enhance Delta agritourism. This could include outreach and education to local farmers, facilitating discussions and networking opportunities for interested persons on agritourism opportunities, and investigating funding sources for Delta agritourism marketing and promotion.

Once again, the UC Small Farm Program expresses its support for a Delta NHA and looks forward to partnering with the DPC to plan and implement this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Shermain Hardesty, Ph.D.
Director, UC Small Farm Program